

Message Text

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ACTION SR-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 IO-14 ISO-00 ORM-03 VO-03 SCA-01

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 416

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 9067

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, AU

SUBJECT: SOVIET JEWISH EMIGRES TRANSITTING AUSTRIA

REF: (A) STATE 214654; (B) VIENNA 8908; (C) GENEVA 5779

1. UNFORTUNATE UNTIMELY AUSTRIAN MEDIA COVERAGE OF PROJECTED NEW TRANSIT FACILITY FOR SOVIET JEWISH EMIGRES TRANSITTING AUSTRIA BASED ON FACT THAT INTERIOR MINISTRY SECURITY CHIEF PETERLUNGER WHO IS UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE FROM CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE TO FIND ADQUATE ALTERNATIVE FACILITY OF SCHOENAU SOONEST IS NEOPHYTE IN HANDLING PRESS ON SUCH SENSITIVE ISSUE. OTHER GOA OFFICIALS, EITHER IN CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE OR IN FOREIGN OFFICE, HAVE SIDESTEPED ANY COMMENT ON SUBJECT BY PLEADING IGNORANCE ON MATTER AND BY REFERRING ALL QUERIES TO PETERLUNGER'S OFFICE. THEREFORE, FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES, ONLY WELL-INFORMED SOURCES ON FUTURE OF SCHOENAU CAMP AND ITS REPLACEMENT BY ANOTHER FACILITY HAVE TENDED TO BE EITHER CHANCELLOR KREISKY HIMSELF AT POLITICAL LEVEL OR PETERLUNGER

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AT TECHNICAL LEVEL.

2. MOST OF VIENNA PRESS REPORTED AS FACTUAL SITUATION STORY (REFTEL C) THAT AND ICEM-MANAGED TRANSIT FACILITY FOR SOVIET JEWISH EMIGRES WOULD BE OPENED IN FEW WEEKS AT TRAISKIRCHEN. ONLY SOCIALIST ARBEITER-ZEITUNG ATTEMPTED TO CORRECT EARLIER PETERLUNGER COMMENTS (WHICH SERVED AS BASIS FOR PRESS STORIES) BY INDICATING GOA-ICEM-JAI TEAM HAD IN FACT VISITED SEVERAL POSSIBLE SITES, INCLUDING TRAISKIRCHEN AND THAT NO FINAL DECISION HAS YET BEEN MADE ON LOCATION OF NEW FACILITY.

3. RE PARA 4 OF REFTEL A, PETERLUNGER WOULD CLAIM, IF ASKED, THAT GOA HAD IN PAST PROVIDED FOR BOTH EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL SECURITY OF SCHOENAU FACILITY EVEN IF, AS SUGGESTED BY KREISKY, ISRAELIS WITH AUSTRIAN GUN PERMITS MAY HAVE IN FACT LOOKED AFTER INTERNAL SECURITY SCHOENAU FACILITY. IT, THEREFORE, APPEARS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT GOA WILL ALLOW SAME SET OF SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS TO DEVELOP IN NEW FACILITY, GIVEN FACT THAT KREISKY CITED WHAT HE TERMED ISRAELI "SOVEREIGN ACTIVITIES" WITHIN CONFINES OF SCHOENAU AS ONE REASON FOR HIS DECISION TO CLOSE SCHOENAU TRANSIT CAMP.HUMES

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